

The President's Daily Brief

November 18, 1974

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

November 19, 1974*

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*Information as of noon EST November 18, 1974.

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MIDDLE EAST

Tensions continue somewhat eased in the area following public statements from officials in both Syria and Israel that their nations intend to abide by the cease-fire agreement. We have heard nothing further about UN Secretary Waldheim's request to President Sadat to intervene with Syrian President Asad on the subject of renewing the mandate for UN observer forces.

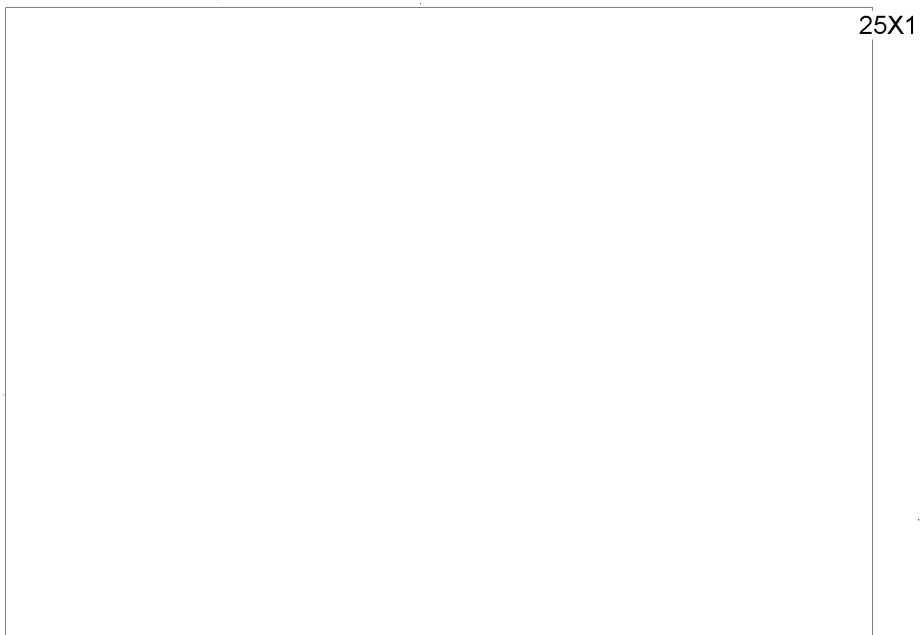
Militarily, both sides remain watchful. The Israelis have continued reconnaissance flights over Lebanon and the Egyptian cease-fire line, and Egyptian armed forces generally remain on alert.

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GREECE

Prime Minister Karamanlis' New Democracy Party won a decisive victory in the Greek election Sunday, polling about 55 percent of the Popular vote for a solid parliamentary majority. He should hold 214 seats in the 300-member parliament.

He considerably outdistanced his nearest rival--the Center Union New Forces led by George Mavros, which won about 20 percent of the vote. Andreas Papandreou's Panhellenic Socialist Movement claimed 13 percent and the United Left--a coalition of two communist parties and a former communist front group--about 9 percent.

Karamanlis now has the clear mandate he sought in order to negotiate on Cyprus and is in a position to clarify Greece's relationship to NATO. Although public opinion will continue to demand a "satisfactory" settlement of the Greek Cypriot refugee problem and a more independent, nationalistic approach on NATO, Karamanlis can afford to be more flexible on both issues.

The plebiscite on the monarchy, which is scheduled for December 8, is expected to result in a vote against restoration of the King. Once that has been held, Karamanlis will work to revise the constitution in favor of a stronger executive.

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TURKEY

Sadi Irmak, the independent designated last week to form a new government, assumed the post of prime minister Sunday. He heads a cabinet composed largely of specialists and other non-political figures, and must still win a parliamentary vote of confidence.

Leaders of the Justice and Republican People's parties have announced that they will decide whether to support Irmak after he has presented his program to parliament. Former Prime Minister Ecevit has said, however, that outgoing Foreign Minister Gunes will remain available to assist the new government on the Cyprus issue and other foreign problems.

Irmak's hopes of forming a "national coalition" with ministers drawn from all major parties apparently foundered over the timing of new elections, which now remains open. They still seem likely to come either in the spring or next fall.

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IRAN-USSR

The Shah traveled to the Soviet Union Monday for his first visit since 1972. The USSR's interest in strengthening economic ties with Iran will figure prominently in discussions. Other subjects are likely to be the Middle East and the Indian Ocean.

Discussions on the Indian Ocean probably would focus on the Shah's recent proposals for area security and economic cooperation; these are similar in some respects to the USSR's long-standing proposal for an Asian collective security arrangement. Moscow may again ask why the Shah supports US plans to expand the facilities at Diego Garcia.

Although relations between the USSR and Iran have improved, they remain far from cordial. The Shah distrusts Soviet activity in the Indian Ocean and worries about the Soviets' supplying military aid to Iraq and to South Yemen. The Shah justifies his own arms buildup by pointing to Iraq's unfriendly attitude toward Iran and to South Yemen's protection of leftist guerrillas who are trying to overthrow the Iranian-supported government of Oman. The Shah may well avoid these topics during his Moscow visit, however, since to raise them could invite Soviet questions about Iran's military assistance to the rebellious Kurds in Iraq.

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NOTE

Portugal: Tensions in Lisbon appear to have subsided, at least for the time being, as members of the Armed Forces Movement try to reconcile moderates and militants among their colleagues. Moderate Portuguese military officers demanded last week that the leftist-influenced Armed Forces Movement Coordinating Committee be disbanded.

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